

Abstract of the Disclosure

[0118] An apparatus for expressing and unloading an isoelectric focusing gel from an electrophoresis gel tube includes a first support for supporting the gel tube, a plunger rod and a second support for supporting the plunger rod. The first support is mounted on a movable carriage and is moved toward the second support so that the gel tube slides onto the plunger rod to unload the gel from the gel tube. A plurality of gel tubes can be mounted in a rack and the rack coupled to the first support. The first support preferably includes a plurality of openings oriented with the gel tubes for guiding a respective plunger rod through the axial passage of the gel tubes. In preferred embodiments, the second support supporting the plunger rods is substantially stationary while the first support moves toward the second support so that the gel tubes slide onto the plunger rods. A plunger member such as a rubber ball is positioned in the axial passage of the gel tubes between the gel and the plunger rod to unload the gel in a substantially uniform manner without tearing or breaking the gel. Guide members can be positioned on the top edge of the gel slabs for guiding the gel from the gel tube between the plates that support the gel slab. The guide members include inclined guiding surfaces forming a V-shaped trough above the edge of the gel slab.